

THE
Commonweal

The Seeds of Hatred

Harvest in the Congo

by Daniel M. Friedenberg

Catholic Education

Quantity and Quality

by John C. Moore

Future Imperfect

Forward March?

by Gunnar D. Kumlien

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THIS WEEK

Week by Week	507
Harvest in the Congo by <i>Daniel M. Friedenberg</i>	511
Quantity and Quality by <i>John C. Moore</i>	513
Forward March? by <i>Gunnar D. Kumlien</i>	515
Of Note: Bigotry and the Presidency by <i>David Danzig</i>	517
The Screen by <i>Philip T. Hartung</i>	519
Books	520
Art Nouveau by <i>Betty Kaufman</i>	522
Index to Volume LXXII	524

THE COMMONWEAL
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Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN
Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA
Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
RICHARD HORCHLER

Drama Critic: RICHARD HAYES; *Movie Critic:*
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THE Commonweal

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THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

— week by week —

CATHOLICISM AND THE CAMPAIGN

THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE has now burst upon the political scene with its full explosive force. Vigorous and sincere attempts to control religious prejudice are being overwhelmed, the hope that reason and understanding might prevail is fading and the worst fears are being materialized. Prejudice and bigotry have been loosed upon the land.

That anti-Catholicism would play some part in the campaign for the Presidency of the United States was never in doubt. It is one of the historic prejudices in our country that we have yet to outgrow. But there was the possibility and the hope that it would be confined to those individuals and those groups that have almost wilfully resisted serious, informed discussion about Catholic matters. There was even the hope, expressed by Catholics and Protestants alike, that this campaign would provide responsible spokesmen with an opportunity to raise the proper questions, to resolve differences, and to advance some understanding of the function of religion in a pluralistic society.

What was not expected, what could not have been foretold, is that a group of respected and influential Protestant ministers and laymen would band together and, under the guise of "truth, tolerance and fairness," bolster up and support the forces of anti-Catholic prejudice. Yet this is exactly what has happened. It is this group that has undermined the best efforts, that has realized the worst fears. Headed by the Reverend Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, this group issued a statement which proclaimed its high intentions even as it urged that no Catholic be trusted with the Presidency. And the reasons offered are the same worn, weary charges that have already been answered, so often and at such great length.

The reason that the Peale statement has acted like a lightning rod in the present controversy, that it has attracted responses from almost all religious groups, is not that it is so much worse than others that have been made; it is that it is so very little better and that it was prepared by those who occupy positions of trust and responsibility. Where there should be enlightenment there is obfuscation; where there should be reasoned trust there is unreasoning skepticism.

THE STATEMENT, for example, asserts: "It is inconceivable that a Roman Catholic President would not be under extreme pressure by the hierarchy of his church to accede to its policies with respect to foreign relations in matters, including representation to the Vatican." Aside from the fact that what is apparently inconceivable to this group seems likely to many other people, the Catholic candidate, Senator John F. Kennedy, has dealt with this charge as directly and forthrightly as is humanly possible.

"There is," said the Senator, "only one legitimate question underlying all the rest: 'Would you, as President of the United States, be responsible in any way to ecclesiastical pressures or obligations of any kind that might in any fashion influence or interfere with your conduct of that office in the national interest?' I have answered that question many times. My answer was and is 'No.'"

This statement is fully in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and it asserts as strongly as possible the Senator's firm intention to act so that "decisions on every public policy will be my own—as an American, a Democrat and a free man." In questioning the Senator's ability to act according to his asserted beliefs, the Peale statement cast doubt upon the fitness of any Cath-

olic for the Presidency. It implies strongly that the word of a Catholic is not to be accepted at face value.

That this is not a fanciful inference to draw from the statement was made clear by Dr. Harold Ockgena, one of the signers of the Peale statement. Senator Kennedy's statements on Church and State, said Dr. Ockgena, were analogous to Mr. Khrushchev's statements on peace. Both men, he said, were prisoners of their respective philosophical systems. To say this is, in Cardinal Newman's phrase, to "poison the well of controversy," for it asserts that a man is to be distrusted simply because he is a Catholic.

In fact, one can apply to these men much of what Cardinal Newman said of Charles Kingsley when the latter attacked his integrity. "He appears to be so constituted as to have no notion of what goes on in minds very different from his own, and moreover to be stone-blind to his ignorance. . . . Had he been a man of large or cautious mind, he would not have taken it for granted that cultivation must lead every one to see things precisely as he sees them himself. But the narrow-minded are the more prejudiced by the very reason of their narrowness. The Apostle bids us 'in malice be children, but in understanding be men.' I am glad to recognize in Mr. Kingsley an illustration of the first half of this precept; but I should not be honest if I ascribed to him any sort of fulfillment of the second."

Surely these words apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the signers of the Peale statement. But, since they cannot accept at face value the response of Catholics, the principal work of teaching and correction

must fall to others. Fortunately, informed and sensitive spokesmen of other faiths have responded with an immediacy and force that cannot be denied, that must have strong effect.

So strong, in fact, has been the reaction to the Peale statement that it may mark not only the high point of religious bigotry in this campaign but the turning point. Already two very important things have happened in reaction. First, bigotry has been called by its proper name. Both Dr. John Bennett and Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary have said that the Peale group was unrepresentative of Protestant thought and reflected "blind prejudice." Such criticism will ensure that bigotry and prejudice will not go unrecognized and unchallenged merely because they are presented under the guise of fairness and tolerance. Such criticism will not, of course, put a halt to all that is vicious and harmful in the attacks on Senator Kennedy's religion. But it will make it more difficult for the intolerant and biased to rest easy in their convictions of righteousness.

More important than this negative task, however, is that of stating the terms in which religion and politics engage each other. For there is a relation, of course, and many people could not equal the equanimity of Dr. Peale when he said of Mr. Nixon's Quaker faith, "I don't know that he ever let it bother him." Elsewhere in this issue there is an admirable formulation of the terms in which religion and politics can best be discussed. This statement, prepared by religious leaders of different faiths, deserves the widest attention, for it can do much to stifle acrid debate and to promote useful discussion.

Any statement for or against any candidate based on religion is contrary to American principles. We cannot allow the religiously prejudiced to distort the issues or to defile our democratic election procedures.—*Dr. Lewis Webster Jones, National Conference of Christians and Jews.*

It is clear that two kinds of campaigns will take place between now and November 8. One is the official campaign in the public forums, the other is a whispering campaign in private parlors. . . . The United States cannot afford the indefinite continuation of malice and prejudice among groups of Americans. How we decide our votes is possibly as important as for whom we vote, for it will determine whether . . . we face our world

responsibilities as a mature and united people, with respect for each other. Let us at least give ourselves and our countrymen the benefit of concentration on real and relevant issues.—*National Council of Jewish Women.*

Religious bigotry, however and wherever practiced, is an affront against the American dream. Our beloved country is committed to equality of opportunity in all areas of society. We are proud of the progress being made in eliminating discrimination in employment, education, and housing. What a tragic defeat and mockery it would be if we now permitted anti-religious bigotry to invade the sanctum sanctorum of democracy, the voting booth!—*N.Y. Board of Rabbis.*

A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE: RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND THE ELECTION

The following "Statement on Religious Liberty in Relation to the 1960 National Campaign" was recently released to the press, signed by one hundred Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religious and lay leaders, including Edward S. Skillin for The Commonwealth. Among the twenty-nine Roman Catholic signers, all well-known lay or clerical figures, were Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston, Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio and Bishop Robert J. Dwyer of Reno.

WE REAFFIRM our loyalty to the Constitution of the United States and its provision that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States," and the declaration in the American Bill of Rights that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." We affirm that religious liberty is basic, historically and philosophically, to all our liberties, and that religious and civil liberties are interdependent and indivisible.

It is our conviction that man's freedom is an essential attribute of human nature. The sacredness of this truth has long been recognized as fundamental to Western society. The founders of this nation, in emancipating themselves from tyranny, asserted their right to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness.

These rights are guaranteed in our Constitution to each of us as citizens, and also to the associations, societies, and religious faiths to which we belong. Freedom is fundamental to faith. Freedom is fundamental to the exercise of conscience. It is necessary, therefore, to the essence of our faith that we respect the diversity of religious viewpoints and their freedoms.

We believe that it is the responsibility of the members of our various religious organizations to oppose vigorously all attempts to make religious affiliations the basis of the voter's choice of candidates for public office. It is a vicious practice and repugnant to all honorable Americans to set class against class, race against race, and religion against religion.

The judgment of God finds us at a particular moment in history, confronted by its unique challenges and dilemmas, and it is there that our testing is. In the circumstances that now confront us, we must act according to our principles, or be found wanting. In the election campaign of 1960 we face a real and inescapable challenge with respect to the relation between man's religion and the responsibility of the nation's highest elective office.

To speak in this immediate situation will occasion charges of partisanship, but we cannot be silent. We are anxious only that the voter's choice be made on true and vital grounds and issues, on the candidates' whole character and record, and not solely or primarily upon the matter of religious affiliation.

It is our determination and our duty to clarify this issue in order that votes shall not be cast for one candidate or the other because of religious prejudice or misinformation.

More serious by far than all real or fancied risks is the damage that most certainly will be done to our American community if 40,000,000 of our fellow-citizens should be made to feel that they are barred from full and free participation in our national life because of their religious affiliation!

That we may further the fulfillment of our American democracy under God, we suggest that the foregoing affirmations and the following principles be guidelines for action in the 1960 election.

1. The exclusion of members of any family of faith from public office on the basis of religious affiliations violates the fundamental conditions of a free democratic society, as expressed in the spirit of our Constitution.

There must be no second-class citizenship in the United States, whether it is based on religion, race, class, or national origin.

2. The religious faith of a public officer is relevant to the conduct of his office.

The religious faith of a person of integrity will influence his private and his public conduct. The relevance of faith to his personal spiritual life is a private matter. His religious faith can give him an insight, independence, and composure that will enable him to make dispassionate judgments in the crises of public life, and lead the nation to a more creative fulfillment of its destiny.

The bearing of the religious views of any candidate of any party upon his decisions in public office is a public matter. Inquiry regarding this relevancy is an exercise of responsible citizenship, if conducted in such a way as not to violate the constitutional prohibition against any religious test for public office.

3. No citizen in public office dare be false either to his conscience or to his oath of office.

Both his conscience and his oath impose responsibilities sacred under the law of God. If he cannot reconcile the responsibilities entailed by his oath with his conscience, then he must resign, lest he fail his nation and his God.

4. The fact that a major religious group has so far never furnished the nation with a candidate who won election to a particular public office does not obligate the voters to elect a candidate of that faith to that office solely to demonstrate our devotion to democracy.

This would establish a religious test for public office much narrower than the one complained of, and contrary to the obvious intent of the Constitution. It would, furthermore, focus attention on a marginal qualification rather than on the essential qualities of personal integrity, leadership capacity, and policies relating to central issues.

5. No religious organization should seek to influence and dominate public officials for its own institutional advantage.

The exercise of public office must always be in the public interest, and serve the welfare of the whole community, local or national. The rights and liberties of each and every voluntary association must be respected and protected as long as they do not infringe upon the like rights of others.

6. Every person of every faith must be accorded full religious liberty, and no person should be coerced into accepting any religious belief or practice. No religious group should be given special preference or advantage by the state, nor allowed to use state agencies for the restriction of other faiths.

7. A candidate's faith, and his affirmations of it, as they bear upon his responsibilities in public office, should be viewed in their best light rather than their worst, and the response and expectation of the nation should be such as will encourage him to attain the highest spiritual and moral realization which his own faith can inspire.

8. Just as the choice of candidates for public office should be based upon integrity, leadership, and convictions on basic issues, so the public officer after his election is obligated to make his appointments to subordinate positions on a non-discriminatory basis, using competence and record rather than religious affiliation as the criteria of selection.

9. The President's participation in important national and community religious functions can be a fine symbol of the common concern for the spiritual welfare of the nation. But if for reasons of his own he feels that participation in a particular religious ceremony is not in order, it would be contrary to the civic character of the American Presidency for him to feel obligated to accept the invitation. Participation in special religious ceremonials is an aspect of the Presidency that is secondary in importance to matters of constitutional responsibility, such as the conduct of foreign affairs, the governing of the nation, and the execution of the laws, and it must be weighed in proportion to these functions in any estimate of a candidate's suitability for that office.

10. Every public official who is a member of a religious group should, of course, take into consideration the spiritual and moral principles of his faith in confronting the decisions he must make. But in our pluralistic society he will recognize that the values in historic faiths other than his own must be brought to bear upon the problems of the day. He alone, under the judgment of God, can fully appraise the force and applicability of all such values and advice for his situation, and he should seek to apply all in such a way as to enhance and undergird the best interests of the nation.

OTHER COMMENTS ON 'THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE'

Who is the man best able to lead America during the next four years . . . ? Who has the soundest program, the highest wisdom, the character we can best trust in this hour of the world's urgent need? . . . In reaching our decision we should take into account not one factor but every factor that seems to us to have any importance. In this hour of crisis, if America is not to fall short of God's purpose, and if its future is to be secure, we must have the best available leader, whether he be, in this case, Quaker or Roman Catholic.—*"Presbyterian Outlook."*

It seems legitimate to us to ask certain questions. . . . It is not legitimate, however, to refuse to listen to the answers and to declare that a candidate must be voted for or against not because of his stated position but simply because of his membership in a certain group . . . to

vote against or for a man simply because he is a member of a group . . . is bad politics and worse religion.—*Methodist "World Outlook."*

The religious opposition to Senator Kennedy of the type associated with a kind of Protestant underworld . . . is still with us, and it is hard to say whether there is more or less of it now than in earlier periods. However, there is a new kind. . . . It speaks as though trying to be fair; it renounces bigotry; it often has good things to say about Kennedy's stand on Church-State issues and pays tribute to him as a person. But then it launches the most one-sided attack on the Roman Catholic Church, emphasizing the worst in Spanish or Latin American Catholicism and interpreting Catholic teaching about religious freedom in the worst possible light.—*Dr. John C. Bennett, "Christianity and Crisis."*

Harvest in the Congo

*Africanism and hatred of the white man
are simply reverse sides of the same coin*

by DANIEL M. FRIEDENBERG

NZINGA A NKUWA, Lord of the Congo—later baptized John I—was ruler of a territory larger than Portugal when Diogo Cão discovered the mouth of the Congo in 1482. The Bakongo Empire, embracing what is now known as the southwest part of the Belgian Congo, the southern part of the French Congo and northern Angola, was organized in a stable, populous kingdom based on skilled cultivation of the alluvial basin, considerable political autonomy being given to the various tribal chiefs. Rule of law prevailed, with a central army and recognized appeal courts.

King Nzinga a Nkuwa, fourth of his line, welcomed the Portuguese who, by direct instruction from King John II of Portugal, were careful to treat him as an equal. But Nzinga's notable son, christened Affonso I, learned the more bitter truth. The Portuguese, whose first thought was a legitimate desire to save the souls of the heathen, soon realized the importance of their bodies for forced labor in the mines and plantations of the West Indies and America. Less than thirty years after the first Portuguese boat anchored, Monsignor J. Cuvelier tells us in *L'Ancien Royaume de Congo*, King Manuel instructed his emissaries: "Although the principal aim is to serve God and the pleasure of the king, all the same you will explain [to the king of the Congo], and as though you were speaking in my name, what he must do to fill our ships in the way of slaves and copper and ivory."

Affonso I of the Congo tried desperately to make sense of Portuguese demands. He pinned his hopes on Christianity and in letter after letter over nearly forty years pleaded for missionaries. He sent his own noblemen to Portugal to be trained for the priesthood. He renamed his capital San Salvador after the church he helped build there. When traders began to waylay members of his own family for sale he appealed in vain to the Portuguese king. In 1518 he succeeded in having

one of his sons consecrated a bishop in Rome and made a direct appeal to Pope Leo X which was shunted aside through Portuguese influence. In 1539 Affonso I made a final appeal to Pope Paul III, who had answered his correspondence with some sympathy. But the king of Portugal refused him the use of a ship to send an embassy and influence again did its deadly work.

SUCH IS the auspicious European beginning in the Congo. A Portuguese historian working with native documents estimated that some 1,400,000 slaves were taken from the Congo area between 1486 and 1641. Before Portugal went into decline, it succeeded in depopulating the Congo coastline and converting a prosperous kingdom into a waste whose very ruins were forgotten by the nineteenth century. The German historian A. Ihle summed up in *Das Alte Königreich Kongo*:

"How great was the moral damage of this hunt and traffic in 'black ivory,' it is difficult to say. Gradually, the last social links were broken and the whole [tribal] structure utterly destroyed. . . . Not only did the stronger sell the weaker, but even the bonds of family life were broken, and parents sold their children or children their parents as generally worthless objects to the Portuguese, who branded them with a hot iron as if they had been sheep."

This was the background before the entrance of Belgium. The Belgium intrusion into the Congo deserves special note in order to understand the depths of the present race hatred. It is, of course, Leopold II who bears the historic responsibility for setting off the modern partition of Africa. Since a little fish can only eat littler, Leopold II searched the shoals too shallow for the sharks. Failing in intrigues involving the Philippines, the Fiji Islands and China, he discovered that Stanley had been peddling the Congo for some time. Gladstone was in power in England at the moment, a man opposed to African adventures. France was up to

Mr. Friedenberg, a N.Y. businessman, wrote his first report on the Belgian Congo for The Commonwealth in 1954.

her neck in Equatorial Africa. Leopold II set forth a bogus International African Association with himself as president, and claimed the Congo. Portugal, seeing through his game and considering the area as her ancient fief, immediately objected and the European nations took sides.

It was here that America first entered modern African history. Leopold convinced the naive Americans that his aim was to put down slavery in Darkest Africa—Arab slavery—and Washington jumped to his support. The French took the opportunity to buy an option from Leopold on any territories he might sell, and rallied to the American side. Such idealism won the day, and the British deserted their Portuguese allies. The United States was thus directly involved in the creation of the most sordid regime ever to rule in Africa.

THE CONGO story is too well-known to bear repetition. Suffice it to say that the principal corporation Leopold set up showed a profit of eighteen thousand times its invested capital within six years! Joseph Conrad embraced his melancholy philosophy of life after a trip through this area while the “Congo system” was being developed, and André Gide turned Communist as a reaction many years later, when the worst excesses had been curbed. For the native inhabitant, the result made former Portuguese depredations seem angelic. The population of the lakeside towns diminished up to seventy per cent in a matter of decades, and estimates of various individuals—E. D. Morel, John Weeks, Roger Casement—calculate between one and three million persons killed during *each* decade of Leopold’s control. (In 1905 Casement wrote to William Cadbury, a rich Quaker; “I don’t know if you have any sympathy for Ireland or her people, and you may not understand how deeply moved an Irishman can be at things here. But it was only because I was an Irishman that I could understand *fully*, I think, the whole scheme of wrong-doing at work in the Congo.”) According to John Gunther, five to eight million natives were killed in the first brutal period, and the population of the Congo today is still much smaller than it was in 1900.

To an age dulled by atrocities, the African habits of the occupying powers like Belgium may seem of little consequence. But we must always keep in mind that it was the grandparents of many of the present Negro leaders who suffered. It is no accident, for example, that Sekou Touré was the first French “community” leader who declared for independence. It was his own grandfather, Samoury Touré, who battled the French and was sent into exile. And the admiration of Patrice Lumumba for Sekou Touré and Kwame Nkrumah has a large part of its roots in white prisons.

I have made several trips through the breadth of

Africa and have stayed for a time in the former Belgian Congo. Nowhere outside of the Union of South Africa have I found such smothered hatred for the white man. The hidden aspect of Belgian efficiency and order, apparently in such contrast with the disorder rife in the French and English colonies, was a wild rage against the white caste that formed less than one per cent of the total population. In psychological terms, the Caucasian crust was the conscious face of the Congo and the native population the repressed unconscious, ready to explode at the first removal of firm controls and project all its fantasies and desires into the real world. This hatred of the white man shows remarkable kinship with the subterranean aversion that the people of Eastern Europe have for the Russians. When Premier Khrushchev unturned the screw a turn or two in his early days, East Germany, Poland and Hungary exploded. He hastily tightened the vise, crunching many thousands of Hungarians in the process. But the Belgians could not do this, being neither as strong as the Russians nor as hypocritical in the use of ideals to advance their economic interest and national power.

IT IS REVEALING that the white overlords in the Congo were as conscious of this race hatred as the mass they dominated. The extreme panic among the Belgian colonials is a key to these guilt feelings. During the last month, many stampeded and streamed to the nearest frontier without good reason, as though projecting what would be done to them by reference to their own past actions. The much-vaunted façade of paternalism crumbled overnight at the first breeze of liberty, regardless of how licentious the uses of this liberty may seem to outsiders. And Patrice Lumumba has solidified his position in Leopoldville, where he is a tribal alien, by manipulating the fear of Belgian paratroopers. His success indicates the terror the “paras” implanted in the mind of the natives.

As part of this deliberate racist policy, the Belgians refused to give any higher education to the Negro populace. Not until 1955, under pressure from the Socialist opposition in Brussels, were two universities opened in the Congo. The consequence was that, in direct contrast to the situation in the British and French colonies, no native elite steeped in European ideas and background had the chance to evolve: Patrice Lumumba, Moise Tshombe, Joseph Kasavubu and Albert Kalonji are much closer to each other in common ignorance than any is to a Kwame Nkrumah or a Leopold Senghor. Not only did the Belgians abandon the Congo to men ill-equipped to understand the modern world, but their polity left the population split between two different and contradictory elements: a rural zone of petty tribes no more advanced than their ancestors five centuries before and a detribalized urban populace concentrated in the few large cities. This was

excellent machiavellian practice for the Belgians as long as they were in control. Lack of education meant a dearth of intelligent opposition. The tribes could be controlled through buying the chiefs. And the detribalized city workers were terrorized by the paratroopers. Excellent practice indeed—if one intended to rule forever. But a more stupid approach could not be imagined if the Belgians had any sense of history, even of the history of their own country, which was squeezed from a covetous France less than one hundred thirty years ago by the kind of pressures that now have led to freedom for the Congolese.

The Belgian pattern of harsh repression and sudden freedom was the worst possible formula of emancipation because it left a country devoid of legitimate authority. In Morocco, where the French almost achieved the same kind of calamity, the conflict between the rural tribes and city proletariat grouped around Istiqlal was bridged by the authority of the Sultan. But the Congo is no historic entity like Morocco; more like Nigeria, it is a potpourri conceived by the combined delusions of several European rulers. The Bakongo people of Leopoldville Province spill over into Angola and the French Congo. The tribes inhabiting Katanga Province form an ethnic grouping with Northern Rhodesia. The extreme eastern Congo is a part of the culture lapping Lake Tanganyika. And the north has affinities with Moslem Africa. Only force—white force backed by the myth of racial superiority—held these diverse peoples together.

THE TWO IDEAS that have any meaning in the Congo are reverse sides of the same coin: hatred

of the white man and Africanism. That ignorance and impotence which the Belgians enforced as an ideal called Paternalism now is turning against its father, and the son does not want to be a younger brother but a patricide. We should not be too surprised; in the jungle of emotions, the son has to kill the father in order to emerge from the chrysalis. Where the black butterfly will flutter, no one can say at this time.

Yet we should try to exercise the minimum of charity which is talked about in religion but rarely shown. We expect far more from the new nations than we do from ourselves. It is almost a miracle that the Negroes of Africa, despotically treated by the white powers, have not reacted with even greater hatred toward Western society. If their leaders are not fully "responsible," the ultimate definition of responsibility is called to mind. Was a President of the United States responsible when he dropped an atomic bomb on a large city instead of first giving warning and then a demonstration of the bomb's fearful might on an unoccupied area? Did England and France show responsibility when they invaded Egypt without notice or declaration?

If the most civilized of world powers are capable of wanton acts, we should not expect superior conduct from natives who, as yet, have not shown a culture pattern including Buchenwald, Auschwitz or those torture centers set up by the French to terrify the Algerian nationalists. Patience, forbearance, charity and, above all, freedom from the taint of race prejudice are required before we can expect the new black leaders of the Congo to forgive us the sins committed against them.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Quantity and Quality

by JOHN C. MOORE

THE QUANTITY and the quality of Catholic education are two problems which, separately or together, are troubling most Catholics in this country. To keep all Catholic children, from six to twenty-two, in Catholic schools, without being a trifle ashamed of the results, is a high ideal, perhaps too high in view of the growing shortage of teaching religious and the rising cost of maintaining two complete educational systems, public and Catholic. Faced with

these difficulties, perhaps Catholic education should pursue its objectives somewhat differently. Without necessarily abandoning any part of the system as it now exists, perhaps Catholic education should rely more on publicly supported schools for elementary and higher education while seeking the goal that every Catholic child should go through a Catholic secondary school.

Few Catholics, apparently, can face dispassionately the possibility that their children may not be taught by the sisters in elementary school, but this is never-

Mr. Moore is an instructor in history at Hofstra College. This is his first appearance in *The Commonwealth*.

theless a possibility to be faced. And perhaps the tragedy would not be unmitigated if Catholic families would begin to provide the children with the kind of instruction heretofore expected from the sisters. One pastor I know of claims that Catholic elementary schools, by assuming too much responsibility for the welfare of the children, have solved the problem of inadequate religious guidance at home only at the cost of perpetuating it. He therefore allows no "children's Mass" on Sundays, but urges the children to attend Mass with their families. He has no first-communion class, but makes it the responsibility of each family to present its fledglings, properly prepared, to the pastor for their first communion; and each child first receives the Blessed Sacrament, not with the other children, but with his family.

If some of the money and energy that would go into expanding our school-system went into educating parents, providing them with necessary aids for religious instruction, and impressing upon them that the religious education of their children is the parents' right and responsibility, then perhaps the net gain of such a new direction might be greater than the loss. Parents are no longer illiterate; it need not be assumed that they are incapable of such a task. And the ideal of a family-effort at education, education carried on by parents and older brothers and sisters and augmented by the aid of religious who could be freed from the responsibility of giving a complete education to all Catholic children, is one no less worthy than the ideal of every Catholic child in a Catholic school.

TO MAKE an essential distinction between elementary and secondary education is, of course, somewhat arbitrary; but many parents might find the demands of teaching high-school religion as embarrassing as those of teaching high-school geometry. Adding fractions is one thing; finding the area of a circle is another, although most parents could handle the latter if they studied the textbook. In any case, however, high-school students are at a most impressionable age, are frequently looking beyond the home for adults worth imitating. Decisions of great importance are made in high school, decisions calling for counsel that cannot always be provided by parents and that cannot be provided by those blind to the life of grace. But since the value of Catholic secondary education hardly needs demonstration, perhaps we should consider the problems on the level of higher education.

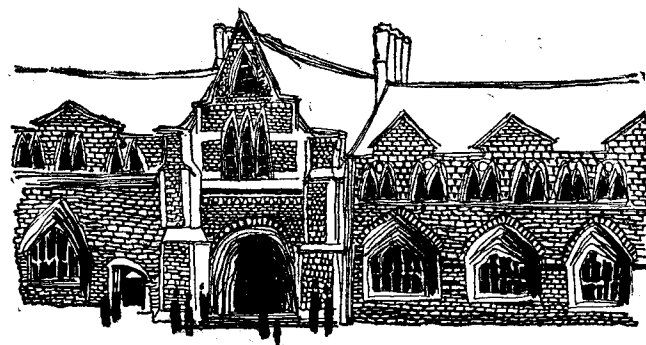
An article in a recent issue of a well-known Catholic journal provided some evidence for a proposition that many others have long thought true, that non-Catholic colleges and universities are not in themselves any more dangerous to the faith than a non-Catholic corporation or country-club. The question, actually, is not what they do but what they don't do. They do not

provide studies in theology; or if they do, they do not incorporate in those studies the truths of Revelation and are therefore, to the mind of the Catholic, inadequate. But this is an inadequacy which could easily be met. Instead of multiplying campuses for Catholic colleges, instead of spending millions of dollars on more Catholic laboratories, more Catholic administration buildings, more Catholic gymnasiums, and more Catholic parking-lots, why not use some of that money to establish Centers of Catholic Studies, staffed with competent Catholic theologians, on or near every state-supported campus, and perhaps even on or near some private campuses?

The Newman Clubs already provide the seeds of such centers, and it is not unlikely that many colleges and universities would eventually recognize and give credit for theology courses by men of scholarly training and ability. Nor is it unlikely that many colleges and universities would be willing to include competent Catholic theologians, lay or clerical, as regular faculty members of their departments of religion. In any case, it seems to me to be a relatively simple affair to provide Catholic theology on, or at least near, non-Catholic campuses.

I might also add that to complete this program of education our high schools would have to take greater pains to point out that faith lives by grace, not by argument, and to avoid giving the student the impression that the Catholic Church is so obviously the one, true church that anyone who does not acknowledge its authority is either a fool or a fraud. The latter impression sometimes puts unnecessary strain on the faith of students who encounter thinkers who are not Catholics, but who are not fools or frauds either. Obviously this is an unnecessary strain, but it is not an uncommon one.

THE FINANCIAL advantages of accepting this new direction for Catholic education are obvious, but a variety of other happy results might be expected as well. Besides uniting the family in a common effort to learn (and, as any teacher will testify, parents will learn doubly well if they are learning in order to teach), this program might ease friction between Catholics and non-Catholics over state-expenditures on public



education, especially in areas where Catholics have been charged with sabotaging the public-school system by consistently voting against such things as school-bond issues.

Further, the quality of Catholic elementary schools and institutions of higher learning should increase immeasurably, once they are relieved of the responsibility of accommodating all Catholic students. With the concentration on secondary schools, those teachers presently in our colleges and universities who are better suited for high-school education could be shifted to that level, to the benefit of both levels and of the teachers themselves. The religious in all phases of the Catholic school-system who have become teachers in the first place out of obedience, or out of a sense of pastoral

responsibility which is sometimes mistaken for the aptitude or capacity for teaching, could devote their energies to tasks better suited to their talents and interests. And funds previously used for physical expansion could now be used to improve the caliber of the teaching on all levels.

In brief, Catholics might be delivered from the temptation to sacrifice the quality of Catholic education for the quantity. And, not least, the presence of Catholic thought on non-Catholic campuses would not only accommodate the Catholics there but would also contribute to the communication between the Catholic and non-Catholic intellectual communities which has been in the past, and would again be, to the great advantage of both.

FUTURE IMPERFECT

Forward March?

by GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

A TRAVELER in Europe going from north to south, or vice versa, will have a clear impression of making a long journey in time as well as space. In northern Europe he will again and again have the feeling that he is looking into the future, whereas in the south the perspective is reversed: he will look backwards into the past. The situation in the Western hemisphere is similar, of course, with the difference that the future in northern Europe seems clearer and more consistent than in northern America.

It has been said that there is no place more like North America, including Canada, than Scandinavia. And yet Scandinavia has moved farther into the future than America, be it for no other reason than that it is not hampered by hypocrisy. What is happening in Scandinavia is really a clue to the world of the future, for more and more countries, regardless of their political systems, are marching on the same road. Indeed, on this score the political aspect seems to have no importance at all. Western Germany, Great Britain and the U.S. are all converging toward the welfare state of the Scandinavian type, and even the Communist countries seem more and more inclined to regard it as ideal. The fact that this concept was born out of Social Democracy appears more and more a pure accident, something not significant.

In the development of the welfare state, it is as if we were all on a road where many people are walking

in the same direction and one little group is far ahead. Those walking behind are asking: What does the country ahead of us look like? Are there any dangers? Are there any disadvantages to continuing on this road?

Many Scandinavians fail to realize their situation in this regard, for they are too much in the middle of it. Many, particularly among the intellectuals, are bitterly critical about the welfare state, but their criticism is usually quite beside the point, being directed against conditions that existed before the welfare state, or concentrating on details and failing to see the whole.

The political objections to the welfare state voiced by the conservatives and the liberals are gradually losing weight, too, owing to the fact that the welfare state, at least in principle, is nowadays accepted by everybody, regardless of political objectives. In fact, the political programs of the different parties are in Scandinavia growing more like each other than in any other part of the world. Everyone admits that the welfare state has come to stay. Only the details are debatable.

All this seems to indicate that the welfare state is an unquestioned part of the future. If that is so, are there any signs of crisis in these most advanced welfare states, any serious failings? There are certainly some fundamental changes, within the social body and the individual, which seem to be the consequences of the welfare state. It is still too early to say whether these changes are temporary phenomena, bound to pass, or whether certain traditional human and social institutions are about to disappear, to the good or evil of

Mr. Kumlien, The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Rome, recently returned to Sweden for a visit.

mankind. But there is no question that the Scandinavian welfare state has brought about many radical social changes.

AMONG THESE changes is the withering away of the family as an institution. This phenomenon can be observed in all the countries which are traveling the same road as the Scandinavian states, but in Scandinavia the process is certainly most advanced. It can be seen in the divorce rate and the detachment between husband and wife, but even more in the gulf which has grown between youth and the older generations.

To a degree, of course, this latter condition has always existed, and in all countries, and it may sometimes even be thought of as healthy. But in Scandinavia this separation has become a complete break, suggestive of the cleavage between races in other countries, for youth in Scandinavia behaves towards its elders the way whites behave towards Negroes in lands that are openly racist.

Middle and old age here are cruelly discriminated against. Foreign visitors are struck by the fact that the generations here have nothing to do with one another, indeed are not even on speaking terms. Young people seem to feel a kind of revulsion towards their families; as soon as they are barely able to take care of themselves they withdraw and join their real family—their pals. And the “old,” who are so shunned and despised, seem to include everyone above thirty.

The older generation seems to submit to this treatment as something unavoidable and has given up practically all claims to authority, even over teenagers. It is assumed today that modern young people are able to take care of themselves right from the beginning. Indeed, if there are children still attached in some way to their parents—and there are still a few of these rare birds—they are often heckled unmercifully by their comrades as if something was wrong with them. Frequently the psychoanalytic word “parent-fixed” is used: “Poor thing, what is going to happen to you in life, parent-fixed as you are. . . .” Few resist this treatment for long.

At the same time, old age is taken care of in Scandinavia as never before in any country in the world. Nobody who has reached the age of retirement need ever again worry about what is going to happen to him. He will have a good pension from the State, in addition to what he himself has saved, free medical care, extremely cheap medicine of the very best kind, comfortable homes and hospitals for old people, radio, T.V., libraries. . . . All this is certainly necessary, for in no other part of the world is the proportion of old people greater than in Scandinavia, owing to a birthrate among the lowest in the world for more than a generation and the excellent medical care which has increased life expectancy to a remarkable degree.

What is called “the growing gray mass” has therefore never been better off and has never had less reason to worry. Yet these old people, taken one by one, have probably never before been so desperately lonely. The early departure of their few children makes them strangers to their children before they are parents out of middle age, and grown children have no need to take care of their parents, taken care of as they are by the State. In addition to this, the small, modern flats make it not only extremely hard to have many children but even harder to lodge old people.

The individual loneliness of the old has been described by Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman in the beginning of his film “Wild Strawberries.” In these scenes an old man walks through a sunny but completely deserted town, looks at watches and clocks without hands, and finally meets his own funeral. And yet what Bergman depicted here reflects a time when the present trend had only just begun. Since that time it has been much more evident.

Visitors to Scandinavia are impressed not only by the aloofness between young and older people but also by the appearance and general attitude of the representatives of “the growing gray mass.” In spite of the facts that the old are more numerous than ever, that their votes are more important than ever and that they have fewer material worries than ever, their behavior is often strikingly humble and apologetic, as if they were always afraid of disturbing anyone. Only old people who are quite wealthy have been able to keep any air of pride or authority. The others accept the fact that they are discriminated against by the young, and sometimes even treated roughly by them, as a condition of life it is futile to resist.

This, then, is one aspect of the most highly developed welfare state, and it puts the question: is the human family obsolete?

THERE is another aspect: the gradual erosion of all moral rules and the resultant social behavior, without any protecting screens of hypocrisy or convention. For this is not immorality but amorality, which even has a streak of innocence about it.

Every summer Scandinavia is visited by foreign journalists and writers, who discover the *sin* in these countries. Their shocked and sensational reports regularly cause strong resentment among the Scandinavians, and with some reason. Sin means breaking a moral code, they say, and if this code does not exist it is improper and even offensive to talk about sin. Many of these Scandinavians love to describe themselves as pagans of the pre-Christian type. They say: I am an old pagan of the same type as my Viking forbears before Saint Ansgar came with his imported foreign morals, which we have been successfully shaking off ever since the Reformation. Now we are back again at the point

where we were before he turned up, and we are proud of it!

But nothing could be more false. The pagan Vikings before Saint Ansgar had a severe moral code of their own, which was different from the Christian moral code but which was rigid to a point that the Roman historian Tacitus once considered it an example for corrupted Rome. The modern pagans in Scandinavia form a new type of human being who does not even pay lip service to a moral code. For them sin is something old-fashioned and ridiculous, and science has proved that it does not exist. They have no sense of guilt, no idea of breaking a rule, just a comfortable feeling of being "modern."

This has reached a point, particularly in regard to sex, that it deeply shocks even visitors from the Communist countries. Although the Communists do not theoretically admit any moral rules, they do adhere to

certain of them, and they appear in the eyes of many Scandinavians to be oddly old-fashioned and eccentrically conservative.

Are the withering away of the family and the rise of complete amorality the consequences of the welfare state? It may be so, but we do not know for certain. Both phenomena may be temporary. But many Scandinavians seem to take for granted that this is the chilly whiff of the future, and they don't like it. They prefer to flee, to turn away from the future, flee towards the wonderful past in backward southern Europe, and settle down there for good. Some of them feel it is cowardly to do so, but in the end self-preservation usually wins. I don't care about the future, they say then, I care about the years I still have to live. And I want to live these years in the past, in the wonderful past. . . .

OF NOTE

Bigotry and the Presidency

WRITING recently in the *Committee Reporter*, published by the American Jewish Committee (Institute of Human Relations, 165 East 56th St., New York 22, N.Y.; five times a year, \$1), A.J.C. program director David Danzig discusses the issue of religion in the Presidential campaign. The substance of his article, "Bigotry and the Presidency," follows:

The prospect of a Roman Catholic candidate for the Presidency—and indeed the possibility of his election—has stimulated a bumper crop of interpretive and even prophetic articles in the religious press, and in mass circulation newspapers and magazines. Fortunately, the kind of vicious and hysterical anti-Catholic propaganda redolent of the "know-nothings" has found almost no expression in these responsible publications. . . . However, the very terms in which most of the controversy has been couched are unfortunate. . . .

What are the most frequent arguments in opposition to a Catholic President? A familiar one is the accusation that the Catholic does not have a free conscience because he must submit to the Pope on matters of religious doctrine. Another common argument charges that a Catholic President would always be subject to the *political* pressure of the church hierarchy (as distinguished from religious pressure). Others argue that Catholics may be divided into groups, one which believes in separation of church and state ("good Americans") and the other which does not (and therefore would not qualify).

These arguments are somewhat peripheral, and certainly misleading. A Catholic's acceptance of Papal authority on religious matters does not relieve him of his individual obligations of conscience in civic matters, nor does it qualify his oath of office. We do not question the sincerity of others who swear to defend and uphold the Constitution. Why assume a Catholic would take the oath with secret reservations?

As for the political pressure of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, it is one of the cherished principles of democratic society that religious groups are entitled to speak out on public issues, and that their pronouncements mingle and contend with the pronouncements of other special interest groups. Certainly, the voters should examine any candidate's record to judge for themselves whether he has the character to subordinate to the general welfare the pleadings of special interest groups, including those with which he may be affiliated. This is a matter of individual courage and character and should be so judged. In addition, the setting up of "good Catholic," and "bad Catholic," categories, regarding their adherence to religious authority, would impose a concealed religious test upon all Catholics from which other religions seem to be exempt. . . .

If any of the above arguments should legitimately disqualify Catholics from the Presidency, should it not disqualify them from other public offices? Yet Catholics have served in an exemplary way as Chief Justices of the Supreme Court, heads of important government commissions, governors, and similar important public

posts. The uniqueness of the Presidency explains much of the controversy.

The President is the personified symbol of the United States; he cannot be segmented to reflect the diversity of our religious pluralism. Indeed, he has always reflected the dominant racial and religious grouping in this country—white and Protestant. . . . When Senator Kennedy asks to be judged as an individual, he is not asking the American people to overlook or ignore his religion, but to grant it the same social acceptance as Protestantism.

It cannot be denied that the pursuit of elected public office is an important aspect of the struggle for equality of acceptance by minority groups—and this quest for acceptance is illustrated even more vividly in the instance of Negro candidates. When a Negro runs for office, he does not ask voters to pretend that he is white; he asks them to accept his right to hold public office without regard to race.

Moreover, enlightened white voters should be neither surprised nor appalled at the prospect of Negroes voting for a Negro candidate in preference to a similarly qualified white candidate, since this tendency reflects the minority groups' aspirations for full acceptance. They realize the group is seeking equality and the status that representation in public office helps to bring. Generally speaking, the prospect of Negroes voting rather solidly for a Negro candidate will not prevent white voters from supporting that same candidate (except, perhaps, in areas marked by extreme racial tensions or prejudice).

In this context, it is heartening to note the results of the West Virginia primary which seem to indicate that Protestant voters in that state did not react against Senator Kennedy for the strong support he had received from Catholic voters in the Wisconsin primary. Nevertheless, there are still many non-Catholics who react to the prospect of predominant Catholic support for a Catholic candidate with great anxiety. This anxiety seems to be rooted in genuine religious conflict in the U.S. for which much of the controversy about a Catholic President serves as a camouflage.

Where does this conflict come from? It is not to be found in a country where one religious group is so dominant that its values and philosophy prevail without competition (which is why, incidentally, there is no fuss about electing a Protestant president in Catholic Ireland). The conflict arises out of the nature of America's religious pluralism. We are a nation in which a multiplicity of religious groups (none constituting a clear majority) struggles in the public market place, each to convince the larger society that its own set of values, policies, and solutions to problems best represent the truth and the interests of the country and the common good.

Generally speaking, Catholics and Protestants divide

sharply on such questions as divorce, censorship, church-state relations, birth control, gambling, etc. Jews, too, have firm stands on many of these questions. On these issues, each group attempts to promote vigorously its own views, to mobilize public opinion in support of them; in short, to make America's values correspond to its own.

Among those who object to the Catholic position on these issues of public policy, there are those who consider the Presidency as the symbolic arena in which the struggle will be joined and settled. They insist that they are opposed to a Catholic President not out of bigotry, but simply because they do not wish America to become more Catholic.

Here is a serious fallacy that leads to prejudiced thinking regardless of good intentions, based on the assumption that the election of a Catholic President would automatically guarantee the ascendancy of the Catholic viewpoint on these issues. But the major reality to face is that the struggle among religious groups to shape America to their own points of view is irrelevant to the religious affiliation of the President. If, indeed, the religion of a candidate does have any significance—as a prominent sociologist pointed out recently—a governor or mayor is in a much more “strategic” position than the President, in terms of *realpolitik*, since most of the controversial issues mentioned above fall under the jurisdiction of the state.

Since the conflicts over these issues are important, and the very nature of our country can be affected by the outcome of many of them, it is urgent that they be brought out into the open. . . . To sidestep these issues and allow discussion to center around the question of a candidate's religious affiliation is to substitute facile generalization for the process of resolving real controversies.

If those who oppose the Catholic view on issues of public policy were really to take American religious pluralism seriously, they would cease trying to advance their own views by asking Catholics to give up theirs. Instead, they would seek to secure public support for their own programs, through the same sort of social action campaigns that Catholic groups at times have conducted. To believe that they can resist the growth of Catholic values and silence public opinion, which supports such values, by keeping a Catholic out of the White House is not only delusory, but will also lead to bitterness and distrust, as well as meaningless conflict.

Our differences are real and should be faced; only honest confrontation and competition will insure that our conflict will not disintegrate into group libel along religious lines. Unless we learn to oppose each other constructively on our points of difference, there is little hope that we will effectively cooperate on our points of agreement.

THE SCREEN

QUIPS AND CRANKS, AND WANTON WILES

THERE HAVE been so many stories about Marilyn Monroe and her hard work, about Yves Montand and his charm, about their interest in each other, and about their highly respected spouses that "Let's Make Love" probably got more free advance publicity than any other movie of the year. After seeing the film, one wonders what all the shouting was about. "Let's Make Love" is a thin little comedy about a billionaire who falls in love with a showgirl and takes a role in her current off-Broadway revue in order to be near her and win her. This skimpy story is decorated with a lot of gags, some of which are quite funny; it is also decorated with a lot of verbal-and-visual jokes, some of which are in quite bad taste.

The cast is led by Yves Montand, and Marilyn Monroe, who displays a great deal of herself in peek-a-boo costumes, is second fiddle to the male lead since her characterization has no more scope than that of a well-built showgirl with a heart of gold. Although she gives her all when singing and dancing to Cole Porter's "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," oldsters in the audience are likely to remember with nostalgic longing Mary Martin's more subtle handling of this suggestive number. Supporting the two leads are Tony Randall as the billionaire's public relations man, Wilfred Hyde White as his lawyer and adviser, Frankie Vaughan as the very capable though often drunk singer in this off-Broadway revue, and several others as theatrical characters and the billionaire's entourage. Jerry Wald gave his picture a handsome color production and George Cukor directed it well, but "Let's Make Love" could have been a much brighter film if it had moved faster, used its good cast more and its off-color jokes less.

EVEN MORE disappointing, when one considers the promising names involved, is producer Stanley Donen's "Surprise Package." Harry Kurnitz's screenplay (based on a book by Art Buchwald) follows the wild adventures of a racketeer who is kicked out by the U.S. government and exiled to his native Greece. With a lot of zany lines and satirical situations, "Surprise Package" is often reminiscent of "Beat the Devil," but it lacks the deft handling needed in this kind of off-beat lampooning of serious subject matter.

Stanley Donen, who has exhibited the light touch in such amusing movies as "Indiscreet" and "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers," moves his new film at a slow pace that gives viewers too much opportunity to realize that some of the incidents and several of the visitors to the tiny island of Kadmos are not funny but downright

painful. Furthermore, Yul Brynner in the lead role is somewhat heavy-handed, as if he didn't quite get the intended joke. Wearing dresses cut as low as Marilyn Monroe's, Mitzie Gaynor plays the gangster's moll with a light-hearted flippancy appropriate to the film's burlesquing. And Noel Coward is excellent as the de-throned King Pavel who managed to escape from Anatolia with the gem-studded Crown of St. Hubert.

Most of the plot is concerned with Yul's efforts to get the crown, but it does have a few pleasantly sentimental scenes built around Mitzi and a screwball Hungarian delightfully played by Guy Deghy. In spite of this hard-working cast and Donen's good-looking production with lovely black-and-white photography of the Grecian locale, "Surprise Package" is only a slim package with few surprises.

IT IS too bad that the talents of a fine actor like Pierre Fresnay had to be wasted on "The Ostrich Has Two Eggs," a French film with English subtitles, for it is little more than a character sketch stretched into an often dreary full-length movie. Its script, adapted from Andre Roussin's stage play, "Les Oeufs de l'Autruche," is a theatrical and talky joke about a father who is shocked at the behavior of his two sons: one is being kept by a Japanese countess, and the other, a couturier, is homosexual. The latter son never makes an appearance, but there is a great deal of conversation about him—and the supposedly sophisticated French have never been more naive in their dialogue.

The mother, well played by Simone Renant, is saddened by the goings-on, and she blames her husband for neglecting the boys and for not facing the truth. As the father, Fresnay runs the gamut registering disdain, shock, annoyance, masculine superiority and then, when he discovers how well both boys are doing financially, a sort of smug approval. Not entirely unaware of "Edward, My Son," the film rises occasionally above its mediocre script and becomes a sad commentary on our times. It is also a sad commentary on the paucity of material for film makers.

IT IS NOT hard to understand why Frank Sinatra turned down the leading male role opposite Brigitte Bardot in "Come Dance with Me!" another English subtitle French film in which homosexuals play key parts. The late Henri Vidal finally took the role of the dentist who marries Brigitte and then quarrels with his tempestuous wife. Subsequently, he gets involved with an unscrupulous woman who runs a dancing school (Dawn Addams), but when he visits this blackmailing villainess, he finds her dead. It becomes obvious that Henri will be blamed for her murder, so Brigitte, who loves Henri and never doubts his innocence, gets a job at the Addams School to put the finger on the killer.

This mystery-comedy, directed by Michel Boisrond and based on Kelley Roos's novel *The Blonde Died Dancing*, minces no words in the clues that lead Brigitte to a hangout for homosexuals and finally to the invert-murderer. Strangely enough, there is less of the

famous Bardot in the nude, or near-nude, than there is of her male co-actors; and one cannot help but wonder if this frank, calculated and sensational movie wasn't designed not only about but also for the perverse.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

BOOKS

Notable Short Stories from Eastern Europe

SELECTED LITHUANIAN SHORT STORIES. Edited by Stepas Zobarskas. Voyages Press. \$5.

By ALASTAIR GUINAN

WHATEVER might be said for various narrowly conceived notions of what constitutes the short story, the short fiction is well rooted in ancient literature. As Professor Angoff reminds us in the preface to this collection: "Nearly all the Western and Eastern basic religious books are rich with short stories. Our own Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, is filled with beautiful short stories. . . ." Yet American readers have, almost necessarily, limited their reading to the short stories of America, England and western Europe.

The present revised and augmented collection of twenty-two stories contains a new introduction by Clark Mills, which is especially valuable because it provides the English readers with much needed background information for the appreciation and understanding of these fine examples of East European literature, of the short story as it is handled by Lithuanians.

Mr. Mills rightly remarks that "Stepas Zobarskas has gathered examples of nineteenth and twentieth century fiction which, apart from their literary merit, provide our first glimpse of Lithuanian literature, as well as some insight into the life and spirit of a people about whom British and American readers have until now been virtually ignorant. That literature and that spirit are now scattered throughout western Europe and the United States; and it is this dispersion, the result of exile from systems im-

posed by the Nazis and Soviets in succession, which brings their values within closer access than might have been possible in happier circumstances."

The Lithuanian language, which is among the oldest current in Europe, displays interesting relationships to Sanskrit, to Latin, and to Greek; and it is notable for its beauty, its richness, and its expressiveness. Many of these qualities are not easily transmitted in translation, however closely it may approach the ideal of that difficult art; but it is quite otherwise with the content, the intention of the literature. Despite the exotic atmosphere of some of the material, one can read this volume as if he were reading works originally written in English, so expert is the editing. The wide range of these tales and narratives allows ready comparison with stories in our own national literature, but one discovers qualities that seem indigenous to this literature.

A goodly number of these tales deal with the lives of farming people, but the situations in which the characters find themselves, when stripped of adventitious circumstances, are seen to be essentially human situations in which the full outpourings of the nature shared alike by men and women, of whatever standing and calling, are made manifest.

It is in this capacity to depict life that the short fiction, like the novel, justifies itself. As Anton Chekhov so well remarked: "The aim of fiction is absolute and honest truth." What he suggested, of course, is that the concern of the writer of fiction is less with what has, on some given occasion, literally happened as a matter of history than with what is likely to occur,

with what is probable, with what has meaning for everyone because it is *in character*, precisely in consonance with the nature of the protagonists or of whatever theme the writer may choose in order to convey the impression and experience he is portraying. And herein lies the value of this kind of writing, so deeply concerned, as it is, with experience rather than with events.

It is the special task of imaginative literature to break down the barriers by which personal identity has walled off personal sensations, observations, emotions, and feelings. By disengaging our personal separateness, imaginative literature communicates or makes available to others what might otherwise have remained forever shut up within a single self. Thus does literature extend, to a degree not easy to measure, the sense that each one of us has of the direct experience of life.

If pressed for a theoretical expression of method, perhaps not all—maybe, not any—of the writers represented in this anthology would have set forth the mission and purpose of the short story writer in exactly these terms; but all these writers do have in common, in greater or lesser fashion, a notable power to communicate experience to the reader, experience which cumulatively is rich, moving, deeply perceived and deeply felt. Students of the short story, as well as general readers who wish to become acquainted with a whole range of natural literature, will find much to interest them in the analogies and in the differences which these stories exhibit when contrasted with more familiar examples of the *genre*.

The format of the book is most attractive; and the jacket design, evolved by Paul Osmolskis from a

Lithuanian motif, is beautiful in itself and exactly appropriate for its purpose. The collection deserves, as it will doubtless receive, wide circulation as well as a warm welcome from discriminating readers.

Tangles of History

READINGS IN CHURCH HISTORY.
Edited by Colman J. Barry, O.S.B.
Volume I, From Pentecost to the
Protestant Revolt. Newman. \$7.50
(Paper: \$2.95)

By MICHAEL NOVAK

IN A PLURALISTIC climate, men grow more and more weary of interpretations of history, more and more reliant upon their own inspection of primary documents. Busy about many things, they ordinarily satisfy their critical sense with a "taste" of these documents, acquiring a sense for their spirit, tone, and point of view. Specialists endlessly pursue the exact truth; the layman contents himself with the basic truth. Father Barry's volume attempts this basic truth, allowing each age of the Church to speak for itself, in its own accents, and on a well-selected range of interests.

Although the book is some six hundred, double-columned pages (neat, clean, and well-proportioned in appearance), the space is obviously very little for the long period in question. Father Barry selects a few pages from the New Testament; from the Fathers and earlier documents like the Didache; passages from papal decrees, contemporary letters, and discourses on the state of society and the like. Father Barry's focus is imaginative and humanistic.

His explanatory essays for each of the five major parts of the volume and his introductory notes for each section are commendable for their brevity and directness. Their prose is unremarkable and they are probably too apologetic and defensive, but they make a genuine attempt to be fully human and general. He includes documents concerning doctrine daily life, preaching, spiritual-

ity, politics, monastic life, intellectual life. He is especially strong in the attention he gives to documents concerning the relations of Church and State. He reader cannot help sensing in the volume the developing complexity the Church experienced as it entered the tangles of history, and the real, un-abstract organism that the Church is—often ugly, always humble, in the image of *et incarnatus est*.

Fervent letters like those of Ignatius of Antioch, conferences on prayer like those of John Cassian, religious rules like those of St. Benedict and St. Francis, a passionate Christ-centered intelligence like that of Nicolas de Cusa—all recall the archetypes of the Christian spirit, not legalistic and pragmatic but personal and transcending. The decrees, letters, and concordats of the canonist-Popes, and even the selections from St. Thomas on the natural law and on the non-toleration of heretics (conceived as willful and malicious) recall the weight of hu-

man discursiveness and human organizational procedures. The passages from Tauler, Suso, and Ruysbroeck, coming as they do at the end of the volume, suggest somehow the flight of the Christian spirit away from this earth and its concerns—a flight perhaps authentic in its exemplars but incipiently symptomatic of an illness of intelligence, sensibility, and taste for battle—which has come to grip the anaesthetized Christianity of subsequent times, including our own.

A generation of seminarians and college students using Father Colman's volume alongside the better-known church histories (with which, in an appendix, it is collated), will achieve a far deeper and broader vision of Catholicism than is ordinarily prevalent today. The next step will be the increased availability, in paperbacks if possible, of the little-known but insight-laden works of the Fathers and other ardent spirits, for which the appetite is barely whetted here.

Flamboyant Mystic and Saint

ST. PHILIP NERI: An Informal Biography. By Marcel Jouhandeau. Translated by George Lamb. Harper. \$2.75.

By PHILIP BURNHAM

ST. PHILIP NERI, more, it would appear, than almost any other saint, encourages brief, impressionistic appreciations by modern writers of talent and spiritual sensitivity. This "informal biography"—one hundred twenty-nine brief pages—by Marcel Jouhandeau, "a well-known French literary figure," provides solid clues to St. Philip's great attraction.

St. Philip Neri lived almost straight through the violent, revolutionary sixteenth century, from 1515 to 1595. These were years of great turning tides in Western history, with revolutions and counter-revolutions engulfing Europe in partisan bitterness. Historical "forces" were defined in these decades to impose new patterns upon the modern world. But through

eighty years, this straightforward book shows, St. Philip lived a most intensely personal individual life, never hard or doctrinaire, always a beloved and loving neighbor to every type and individual who knew him from near or from afar.

The off-beat extravagance of his behavior set him apart even in the exaggerated melodrama of the high Renaissance and the thunderous wars of Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Much of his quixoticism, if observed superficially, would appear brash and show-offy, or clownish and simply unaware; but almost miraculously, neither his contemporaries nor his biographers have ever made the superficial mistake of regarding St. Philip's gaiety and his irrepressible gambols as a jester's buffoonery. He was undisguiseably a mystic and a saint.

His principal external works, which M. Jouhandeau describes, were the founding of the Oratory, the development of the Roman pilgrimage to seven basilicas, and the

organization of a great aid to the sick poor by Roman society. But much more clearly than with most men and most saints, the inheritance which St. Philip left surpasses his known "works." The sanctity and geniality of his person continue to furnish an almost palpable blessing.

The author stresses several especially important sources of the saint's individual quality. He commences by observing that "Philip's mental outlook was more like that of the men of the fifteenth century than the sixteenth." As the book advances the author seems to show Philip actually living remarkably outside of any time. His effort was not to form the great acts and public institutions and secular trends of his day. He avoided stress and strain about their shaping. His genius was to affect the individual love and will of every person he met in his tireless combing of Rome, from a great number of nameless urchins to many cardinals, kings and popes.

"He never tried to hide or escape

the realities of life, and yet because of this God and the supernatural were all the more necessary to him. Philip fully accepted both earth and heaven." This must be the major key. Perhaps his greatest problem was to prevent the ecstasies, levitations and miracles with which he was endowed from separating him from the human condition and from humility and charity. He was secret about the graces of his mystical life, while he was flamboyant about the joy he found in the free and foolish expressions of flesh and blood, redeemed by the grace of God.

REVIEWERS

Alastair Guinan, a lecturer in the department of English at Hunter College, has contributed to Harvard Theological Review, Theological Studies and other publications.

Michael Novak is a regular reviewer for The Commonweal. He is now at work on his second novel.

Philip Burnham, a former editor of The Commonweal, continues to be a frequent contributor.

ART

Art Nouveau

WHEN DOES the "avant garde" of yesterday take on the patina of the antique? This is a silly riddle, but a look at "Art Nouveau" today brings it up because this movement seems a possible example of the half-way mark: it has the flavor of something both old and original, like an eccentric grandparent, yet it is still far from the dignity of a distinguished ancestor or a figure of consequence in another age.

The exhibition which opened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York of course did not show any intention of consecrating this style as "antique"; on the contrary, it offers a panorama of "art nouveau" more in order to underline its revolutionary aspect, how it broke with the past and at least cleared the way for twentieth-century art. It seems to me, in fact, that a rather strained effort is made to include a few works by such artists as Rodin, Maillol and even Picasso, who fleetingly used terms characteristic of the movement, in order to relate it more clearly to our own day.

This style that was called "new" at the turn of the century (among other things it was also called "young," "flowery," and "the noodle style") presents unusual complications in any attempt to evaluate it. In the first place it had an uncommonly short life of about fifteen years, from 1890 to 1905. But if it was a short life it was a merry one, for it spread like wildfire all over Western Europe and the United States and seems to have invaded every corner of the artistic world, from architecture to bookbinding. The brief intensity and spread of "art nouveau" gives it a butterfly quality that is hard to pin down; its ephemeral nature may of itself, and despite any lapse of time, prevent its ever having the solid weight necessary to those hardy survivors that come to be called "antique." Nevertheless, whatever its historical place or importance may be, it has

Campaign Issues

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an odd fascination that is all its own.

The two strongest impressions left by the exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art are the surface, decorative nature of the style and the extraordinary unity that it achieved among the arts; its nature probably led as a matter of course to the ease of that achievement. In the excellent book *Art Nouveau*, edited by Peter Selz and Mildred Constantine to accompany the exhibit, a quotation from Oscar Wilde appears on the flyleaf: "All art is at once surface and symbol." This quotation is marvelously appropriate; the "whiplash line" and the two-dimensional surface on which it traces its evocative symbolism covers objects ranging from jewelry and furniture to paintings and even buildings. As Peter Selz puts it: "Whatever one calls the style, it belongs to the decorative arts. It was largely a way of designing, not of painting, sculpting or building." Plant forms, so typical of the movement, are frequently applied in direct contradiction of the form beneath, or if a lamp is made in the shape of a cluster of water lilies it is in an utterly unorganic way. This art is indeed always on the surface and symbolic—it certainly never handles a subject in depth or comes to grips with it. The only exception is found in architecture; while it used extensively the delightful surface decor of the style, it also evolved new curving shapes in glass-and-metal, for example, that were certainly a new way of "building." Unfortunately the photographs of architecture in the exhibit give only a faint idea of its contribution.

One odd result of the artistic unity of "art nouveau," where the boundaries between arts and crafts seem to melt away, is that the crafts assume a dominant rôle. Beardsley's bookbindings for Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Wilde's *Salome*,

Tiffany's fantastic "wisteria" lamp of iridescent glass and bronze, and the delicate elegance of the Gallé firescreen are among the choice sights of the exhibit. "Craft" designs by great architects, such as the door-handles by Horta or the silvered candelabrum with its treacily, splayed foot by Van de Velde, are among the most memorable objects in this show that encompasses all the arts. Bonnard and Toulouse-Lautrec are chiefly represented by posters and their graphic work. When one comes upon a painting like Gauguin's *Still Life With Puppies*, despite the elements that relate it to "art nouveau" (the sinuous line on a flat plane, the funny transfer of the tablecloth design to the back of a puppy) it seems like rather an intrusion. The only painting that seems both to belong entirely and be fully a painting is Munch's *The Cry*: the writhing lines of the flattened figure-landscape embody a terror, a warning.

The rising repute of "art nouveau" and the increasing scholarly interest that is being taken in it can be explained in many ways, but the plainest of them is that it has reached that half-way mark between an outmoded style and a historic one; it has reached the point where re-examination begins. Of course a great deal besides reinforces our present interest: its latent relationship to the Japanese woodcut, to expressionism, to the rococo, for instance, all fit in with contemporary interests. In addition, our own art is also chiefly "decorative," even if it is so in an entirely different way.

BETTY KAUFMAN.

Art Nouveau Exhibit Schedule

Museum of Modern Art,
New York City
Closed Sept. 6, 1960
Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh
October 13-Dec. 12, 1960
Los Angeles County Museum
January 17-March 5, 1961
Baltimore Museum of Art
April 1-May 15, 1961

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Index to Volume LXXII

April 1, 1960 to September 23, 1960

Articles, Editorials and Poetry

After Technology, What?	John Cogley	254	Gambling, Morality and the Law	"Of Note"	281
"Alabama, Alaska, Arizona"	Albert B. Southwick	298	Golden Eye of Monet, The	Betty Kaufman	70
Alienation and Response	Daniel J. Callahan	31	Growth for What?	Robert Lekachman	415
America on Trial	Donal O'Mahony	271	Hanging Together	C. K. Yearley, Jr.	487
American in Russia, An	Editorial	195	Harvest in the Congo	Daniel M. Friedenber	511
America's Poor	Lawrence T. King	366	Hope and the Christian	Jean Danielou	7
America's Sainte-Beuve	Edward P. J. Corbett	173	Ideal Candidate, The	Editorial	6
And Now, the Campaign	Editorial	483	Immersion: A Poem	Sister Mary Timothy, S.S.N.D.	443
Apartheid and the Church	Sean Boud	250	Indian Sketchbook, An	Julian Marias	226
Apartheid Struggle, The	Editorial	51	Islam in Africa	James Kritzeck	295
Art Nouveau	Betty Kaufman	522	Italy's Divided Middle	George H. Dunne	10
Back to the Catholic Ghetto?	Editorial	363	Kagawa	Editorial	142
Barriers to Immigration	Editorial	28	Khrushchev and French Catholics	Robert Barrat	149
Berdyaev as Prophet	Bernard G. Murchland	325	Khrushchev to the U.N.	Editorial	484
Bigotry and the Presidency	"Of Note"	517	Korean Disorders	Editorial	117
Bigotry and Responsibility	Editorial	140	Labor, Management and the Public	"Of Note"	495
Bishop in Prison	Editorial	5	Land They Never Knew	Douglas Hyde	369
Brave New World, Indeed	Editorial	80	Lessons of the Summits	Donald Brandon	390
Call to Greatness, A: Teilhard de Chardin	Robert Francoeur	441	Let Them Eat Pills	Editorial	29
Campaigning on T.V.	Editorial	341	Literary Counter-Revolution	Thomas Weyr	255
Canada's TV Problem	John W. Mole	205	"L'Osservatore" on Politics	Editorial	244
Candidates, The	John Cogley	418	Marriage of Disparate Cultures	Betty Kaufman	406
Candidates, Issues and Voters	Editorial	411	Mass Media for Mass Man	John Cogley	130
Case of Magazine X, The	Editorial	54	Meaning of Tibet, The	Wallace Liu	55
Catholic-Jewish Relations	"Of Note"	352	Medical Aid for the Aged	Edward T. Chase	199
Catholic Editors and Senator Kennedy	Exchange of Views	280	Men on the Land	Editorial	30
Catholic Intellectual, The	Exchange of Views	178, 348	More Men at Work	Editorial	5
Catholicism and the Campaign	Editorial	507	Mr. Khrushchev and the Priest-Mayor	Editorial	52
Catholicism and the Elections	"Of Note"	375	Nashville's Method	Editorial	220
Catholics and School Budgets	Editorial	269	Need for Mediation, The	Editorial	81
Catholics in Public Office	Raymond F. Cour	491	Negro Protests	Editorial	4
Challenge to the Candidates, The	Editorial	315	New Hospital Strike?	Editorial	292
Changes in Protestantism	Gregory Baum	203	New Soviet Arms Plan	Editorial	317
Changing Symbol, A	Editorial	270	No Help for the Hungry	Editorial	221
China's Stance	Editorial	140	No Room at the Top	John Cogley	274
Christian and the Community, The	Editorial	27	Non-Gentle Men of Japan	Edward Seidensticker	419
Christian Culture	John Cogley	154	Not So Dark Horses	Editorial	268
Church and the State, The	Jerome G. Kerwin	342	Of Catherine, A Poem	John Logan	447
Civil Rights: A Giant-Step	Editorial	414	Offshore Oil	Editorial	294
Civil Rights Planks	Editorial	365	On a Human Scale	Betty Kaufman	310
Classics in America, The	Horace Gregory	13	On Reading Modern Poetry	Editorial	118
Clear the Aisles	John Cogley	400	Opening Catholic Ghetto, The	Editorial	438
Coming Attractions	John Cogley	37	Opera in Berlin	Martin Bernheimer	467
Communists and Cuba	Editorial	269	Ordeal by Battle	Editorial	5
Complex Task, A	Editorial	163	Other America, The	Michael Harrington	222
Conference for Interracial Justice	Editorial	485	Our Next President	John Cogley	322
Confessional Hero, The	John P. Sisk	167	Our Piles of Wheat	Editorial	245
Congo Agitation	Editorial	437	Packaged Wisdom	Richard J. Bernstein	83
Congo Erupts, The	Editorial	388	Patterns of Discrimination	Editorial	292
Controlling Exhaust Fumes	Editorial	82	Paul Blanshard on Spain	Editorial	141
Cultural Exchanges	Editorial	341	Peaceful Army, A	Nat Hentoff	275
Death in California	Editorial	197	Point Four Youth Corps, A	Henry S. Reuss	146
Defense Against the Bomb	Editorial	197	Political Meteorology	Editorial	115
Dimensions of Soviet Aid	Editorial	412	Politics in Italy	Editorial	117
Democratic Progress Note	Editorial	198	Postscript to Many Letters	Samuel Hazo	151
Dilemmas and Limitations: Teilhard de Chardin	John Whitney Evans	439	Poussin and Rouault	Betty Kaufman	478
Dip in Steel	Editorial	364	Powers Trial, The	Editorial	437
Easter in Nomine	John J. McAleer	64	President's Return, The	Editorial	339
Easter: Vigil, Dawn, Day	John Hazard Wildman	91	Priority of a Priori	John Cogley	228
Eichmann Case, The	Editorial	316	Prologue to a Passion Play	Joseph P. Clancy	129
Elusive Henry Green, The	Max Cosman	472	Protestant Insights Today	Charles Stinson	62
Exit Mr. Connole	Editorial	165	Protestants in Latin America	Willard F. Jabusch	462
Experimenters, The	John Engels	253	Protestants on the Presidency	Editorial	29
Extra-Literary Criticism	Thomas F. Curley	176	Quantants and Quality	John C. Moore	513
Fading Political Issue, A	Editorial	219	Question of Survival, A	Brendan Downey	92
Farm Programs	Editorial	412	Ray of Hope, A	Editorial	53
Farming Votes	Editorial	389	Reactions to "L'Osservatore"	Editorial	317
Festival of Films	Maryvonne Butcher	345	Reading in Our Colleges	Donald W. Miller	89
For New Ideas	John Cogley	444	Reality and the American Dream	Editorial	340
Forward March?	Gunnar D. Kumlien	515	Religion and the Elections	Editorial	365
Freed from Logic	Editorial	460	Religion in the Campaign	Editorial	387
From a Book of Hours	Carol Johnson	278	Religious Conversations Continued	Editorial	139
From the South	John Cogley	58	Religious Discussion in America	Editorial	3
			Religious Issue, The	Editorial	79
			Religious Liberty and the Election	A Statement	509
			Religious People, A	John Cogley	350
			Requiem for a Jazz Festival	Nat Hentoff	393

Resignation, Esq.: A Poem	John Fandel	490
Room at the Middle	Martin Green	38
Rules of the Game	John Cogley	374
Sad Circle, A	Editorial	221
Sanctions Against Trujillo	Editorial	436
Scars of History, The	Editorial	165
Scars of History	An Exchange of Views	347
Second Thoughts on the U-2	John Cogley	302
Secret Cardinals	Editorial	270
Shadow of Truth, The	John J. Kirvan	421
Sholokhov's Survival	Bruce A. Cook	170
Shorter Work Week? A	Sidney Lens	119
Slant on Housing, A	Editorial	196
Small News Item, A	John Cogley	208
Soul of Sicily, The	Gunnar D. Kumlien	125
Southern Rights and Liberties	Philip Burnham	15
Soviet-Chinese Conflict?	Editorial	461
Space and Progress	Editorial	116
Split in the Labor Party	Michael P. Fogarty	323
Stevenson and the Beats	Leo Hines	465
St. Vincent's Hospital	Miriam Whaples	33
Storm in the Caribbean	Editorial	220
Story of Balaam's Ass., The	Sister Maris Stella	88
Student Loyalty Oath, The	Eugene J. McCarthy	86
Summertime	Leonard McCarthy, S.J.	321
Sun Also Sets, The	Edward Siedensticker	283
Sunday Picnic or Cold War	Editorial	486

Taking Man's Measure	John P. Sisk	59
Talking With Each Other	Leo R. Ward	123
Task of the Artist	"Of Note"	209
These Last Few Years	Editorial	459
They Are Playing Our Song	Nat Hentoff	142
Time for Planning, A	John Brophy	445
"To the President" An Open Letter from South American Students		34
To the Students of Chile	Editorial	82
Towards a World Court	Editorial	486
Trimmer's Lenten Reverie, The	Thomas F. Curley	14
Trouble in Tokyo	Editorial	246
Trouble, Trouble	Editorial	413
Truth and Consequences	Editorial	243
Truth, Charity and the Press	"Of Note"	303
Turn for the Worse	Editorial	291
Uninteresting Future, The	Russell Kirk	247
Vatican-Soviet Relations	Gunnar D. Kumlien	224
Ventriloquist, The: A Poem	Leonard Wolf	494
Vinoba's Next Step	Editorial	198
What Now?	Editorial	267
When Is an Issue?	Editorial	435
Who Buys American Art?	Betty Kaufman	214
Who Is the Bigot?	Editorial	164
Whom the Gods Would Destroy	Editorial	388
Withheld by Post Office	Editorial	245
World Council of Churches, The	Gregory Baum	319

Book Reviews

Affair, The: By C. P. Snow	Joseph P. Clancy	184
Agee on Film, Vol. II: By James Agee	Gerald Weales	134
American Communism and Soviet Russia: By Theodore Draper	Michael Harrington	286
Approaches to Christian Unity: By C. J. Dumont, O.P. George H. Tavard		155
Bernanos: His Political Thought and Prophecy: By Thomas Molnar	Philip Deasy	68
Black and Tans, The: By Richard Bennett Robert F. Lucid		405
Brecht: The Man and His Work: By Martin Esslin Bruce A. Cook		284
Ceremony in Lone Tree: By Wright Morris Max Cosman		404
Christ and Apollo: By William F. Lynch	James Finn	182
Christian Imitation: By Louis Bouyer Leonard F. X. Mayhew		499
Christian Today, The: By Jean Daniélou Leonard F. X. Mayhew		499
Clea: By Lawrence Durrell	Anne Fremantle	210
Commandant of Auschwitz: By Rudolf Hoess Derek Morgan		308
D'Annunzio. The Poet as Superman: By Anthony Rhodes	Serge Hughes	190
Degas, Manet, Morisot: By Paul Valéry James R. Mellow		106
Dinner Party, The: By Claude Mauriac ..	Richard Gilman	211
Discovery of God, The: By Henri de Lubac, S.J. Michael Novak		331
Distant Trumpet, A: By Paul Horgan Thomas F. Curley		332
Divided Lady, The: By Bruce Marshall ...	Michael Novak	358
Eating People Is Wrong: By Malcolm Bradbury Nora Magid		109
Edge of Day, The: By Laurie Lee	Max Cosman	22
Edith Stein: Thoughts on Her Life and Times: By Henry Bordeaux. Trans. by Donald and Idella Gallagher Anne Fremantle		156
Elements of Christian Philosophy: By Etienne Gilson William Bryar		100
Encounters: By Daniel Berrigan	Rosemary F. Deen	212
Erasmus and His Times: By Louis Bouyer, Cong. Orat. Michael Novak		102
Food for Centaurs: By Robert Graves	Max Cosman	357
Foreign Bodies: By Jean Cayrol	William Dunlea	308
Four Loves, The: By C. S. Lewis	Michael Novak	430
Golk: By Richard G. Stern	Charles Monaghan	188
Gravel Ponds, The: By Peter Levi	Rosemary F. Deen	404
Great Contest, The: By Isaac Deutscher Martin Peretz		451

Harvest, 1960: Edit. by Dan Herr and Paul Cunco Michael Novak		379
Homage to Clio: By W. H. Auden	Joseph P. Clancy	500
I Am My Brother: By John Lehmann	Max Cosman	69
Imperial Caesar: By Rex Warner	Thomas F. Curley	476
In All Conscience: By Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. Thomas Cassidy		44
Infant with the Globe, The. From the Spanish of Pedro Antonio de Alarcón: By Robert Graves Max Cosman		357
Issues of Freedom: By Herbert Muller Richard L. Schoenwald		104
Jesus Christus: Meditations: By Romano Guardini Leonard F. X. Mayhew		259
Kindly Contagion, A: By Walter Toman	Bette Richart	428
Last Temptation of Christ, The: By Nikos Kazantzakis	Michael Novak	501
Leopard, The: By Giuseppe di Lampedusa. Trans. by Archibald Colquhoun	Richard Gilman	450
Liturgy and Contemplation: By Jacques and Raissa Maritain. Trans. by Joseph W. Evans	Philip Deasy	453
Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner, The: By Allan Sillitoe	Max Cosman	131
Letters to Women: By Ignatius Loyola (and Friends). Ed. by Hugo Rahner, S.J.	Jean Holzhauer	502
Love and Death in the American Novel: By Leslie Fiedler Thomas F. Curley		176
Magic Christian, The: By Terry Southern Edwin Kennebeck		132
Mark Twain-Howells Letters. Edit. by Henry Nash Smith and William M. Gibson James B. Stronks		355
Monsignor Ronald Knox: By Evelyn Waugh William Clancy		19
Montessori, Maria: Her Life and Work: By E. M. Standing	John J. McDermott	43
National Achievement, A.	Claire Huchet Bishop	231
Night Music: By Sven Stolpe	Michael Novak	285
Ourselves Alone: By Padraic Colum	Vivian Mercier	381
Owl of Minerva, The: By Gustav Regler ..	Anne Fremantle	260
Party at Cranston, The: By John W. Aldridge	John P. Sisk	155
Past and Present: By Monika Mann	Jean Holzhauer	476
Philosophy in the Mass Age: By George P. Grant Michael Novak		131
Presence of God, The: By Jean Daniélou Michael Novak		331
Readings in Church History, Vol. I: Ed. by Colman J. Barry, O.S.B.	Michael Novak	521
Rebellious Thinkers: By Donald Lowrie Bernard G. Murchland		325

Riding to the Tigris: By Freya Stark	Gerald James Sullivan	356	Set This House on Fire: By William Styron	Charles Monaghan	380
Ritual in the Dark: By Colin Wilson	Richard Gilman	20	Son of Man, The: By Francois Mauriac	Leonard F. X. Mayhew	259
Saint-Exupéry: By Marcel Migeo.			Sources and Resources: By Barry Ulanov	Philip Deasy	156
Trans. by Herma Briffault	Richard Gilman	332	Stars in Their Courses, The:		
St. Philip Neri: By Marcel Jouhandeau.			By Harry Brown	John P. Sisk	309
Trans. by George Lamb	Philip Burnham	521	Three Circles of Light: By Pietro Di Donato	Philip Deasy	429
Saints Who Made History: The First Five Centuries:			Through Dooms of Love: By Karl Stern	Richard Horchler	186
By Maisie Ward	Philip Burnham	475	Through Streets Broad and Narrow:		
Science of the Cross, The:			By Gabriel Fielding	Max Cosman	260
By Edith Stein	Anne Fremantle	156	Violent Bear It Away, The: By Flannery O'Connor	James Greene	67
Selected List of Children's Books, A	Claire Huchet Bishop	232			
Selected Lithuanian Short Stories: Ed. by Stepas Zobarskas	Alastair Guinan	520			

The Screen, by Philip Hartung

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,		
The	448	
And Quiet Flows the Don	328	
All the Fine Young Cannibals	470	
Apartment, The	351	
Battle of the Sexes, The	229	
Bells Are Ringing	351	
Bent Twigs	497	
Can-Can	16	
Circus Stars	40	
Come Back, Africa	95	
Come Dance with Me	519	
Conspiracy of Hearts	40	
Cossacks, The	328	
Crack in the Mirror	279	
Dog of Flanders, A	152	
Dreams	328	
Elmer Gantry	402	
End of Innocence	497	
Expresso Bongo	127	
Fall of the House of Usher, The	448	
Flame Over India	257	
Flute and the Arrow, The	448	
From the Terrace	402	
Fugitive Kind, The	127	
Gallant Hours, The	378	
Hercules Unchained	448	
Hiroshima, Mon Amour	279	
I Passed for White	96	
Ice Palace	403	
I'm All Right, Jack	229	
It Started in Naples	425	

Jazz on a Summer's Day	40
Kidnapped	180
Killers of Kilimanjaro	152
Last Days of Pompeii, The	448
Let's Make Love	519
Lost World, The	448
Man in a Cocked Hat	229
Man on a String	180
Masters of the Congo Jungle	152
Michael Strogoff	257
Murder, Inc.	425
Oscar Wilde	379
Ostrich Has Two Eggs, The	519
Othello	328
Pay or Die	305
Please Don't Eat the Daisies	65
Pollyanna	257
Portrait in Black	425
Private Property	127
Psycho	469
Savage Eye, The	351
Rat Race, The	279
Rest Is Silence, The	497
School for Scoundrels	425
Sergeant Rutledge	305
Snow Queen, The	153
Song Without End	378
Sons and Lovers	469
Story of Ruth, The	378
Strangers When We Meet	403
Subterraneans, The	403
Surprise Package	519
Tall Story	127
Time Machine, The	448

Toby Tyler	40
Trials of Oscar Wilde, The	379
Unforgiven, The	95
Visit to a Small Planet	180
Wake Me When It's Over	66
Walk Like a Dragon	305
When Comedy Was King	66
Wild River	306
Would-Be Gentleman, The	17

The Stage, by Richard Hayes

Best Man, The	128
Dear Liar	65
Greenwillow	16
Machinal	306

Art, by Betty Kaufman

Art Nouveau	522
Golden Eye of Monet, The	70
Marriage of Disparate Cultures	406
On a Human Scale	310
Poussin and Rouault	478
Who Buys American Art?	214

Records

by Don McDonald and Don Wooten

Birgit Nilsson of the Met	45
Fourteen Jazzy Items	262
Great Artist of Our Time, A	158
Mahler, Mozart and Others	382
Summer Discs	454

Index of Principal Subjects in Articles, Editorials, Letters, and "Of Note"

Administration, 34, 82, 165, 243, 267, 270, 339, 390, 419, 459	Birth control, 98, 397	and school budgets, 27, 269
A.F.L.-C.I.O., 119, 292, 364, 366, 445, 495	Blake, Dr. Eugene Carson, 164	and the community, 27, 363
Africa, 51, 295, 388, 437, 511	Blanshard, Paul, 3, 140	and the ghetto, 363, 438, 450
Agriculture, 30, 245, 389, 412	Braceros, 30	and the law, 281
Air pollution, 82	Brave New World, 80	and the Presidency, 29, 37, 79, 140, 164, 219, 244, 258, 280, 317, 342, 350, 365, 375, 387, 435, 460, 483, 491, 507, 509, 510
Air raid drills, 197	Brazil, 271	and the press, 303, 317
Algeria, 5, 153	British Novels, 38	as a minority, 66, 98
American culture, 31, 222, 231, 247, 254, 340, 341, 350	Canadian television, 205	in Cuba, 269
Anti-Americanism, 246, 269, 271, 413	Cannes film festival, 345	in Indonesia, 369
Anti-Semitism, 316, 347, 352, 427, 470	Capital punishment, 197	in Italy, 117, 244, 317
Apartheid, in South Africa, 51, 250, 330, 426	Cardinals, secret, 270	in public office, 491
Art, and Communism, 170, 255	Castro, Fidel, 220, 269, 388, 413, 487	Catholic Church
Art, and the Christian, 209	Catholic press, the, 303	and education, 27, 151
Automation, 119, 415	Catholics	and intellectuals, 31, 178, 348
Automobiles, 82, 221	and anti-intellectualism, 31, 178, 348	and Negroes, 250, 330, 485
Behan, Brendan, 42	and apartheid, 51, 250, 330, 426	and the State, 342
Beats, and Adlai Stevenson, the, 465	and birth control, 397	in France, 149
Belgian Congo, 388, 437	and Communism, 5, 149, 224	in Latin America, 462
Benson, Secretary of Agriculture Ezra, 245, 389, 412	and education, 27, 154, 269, 513	in Rome, 244, 317
Berdyaev, Nicholas, 325	and intellectuals, 31, 178, 340	Catholic Worker movement, 197
Berlin, opera in, 467	and Jews, 165, 316, 330, 347, 352, 427	Censorship, by the Post Office, 245
	and Paul Blanshard, 3, 141	Chessman, Caryl, 197
	and population, 397	
	and Protestants, 3, 29, 62, 123, 139, 203, 208, 319, 342, 375	

- Children's Books, 231
China, 5, 55, 140, 322, 369, 390, 461
Christian culture, 154
Christian Democrats, in Italy, 10, 117
Church-State relations, 37, 244, 317, 342, 350, 387
Civil liberties, 80, 86, 245
Civil rights, 4, 15, 19, 81, 220, 250, 275, 292, 365, 414
Classics, in America, the, 13, 97
Clerical mind, the, 228
Colleges, 83, 92, 330
Communism, 5, 52, 117, 140, 149, 163, 224, 267, 271, 274, 317, 369
 and art, 170, 255
 in Tibet, 55
Community, the, and Catholics, 27
Compact cars, 221
Confessional hero, the, 167
Congo, 388, 437, 511
Congress, 29, 146, 196, 245, 294, 414
Connally Resolution, 486
Connole, William R., 165
C.O.R.E., 275
Cuba, 220, 269, 388, 413, 487
Cultural exchanges, 341, 467
Cushing, Cardinal Richard, 27
Day, Dorothy, 197
Death Penalty, 197
De Blanc, Mons. Irving A., 363, 438, 450
Defense, Civil, 197
De Gaulle, General Charles, 5, 322
Democracy, and leadership, 400, 411, 444
Democratic party, 79, 115, 196, 219, 243, 268, 291, 298, 483
Dialogue, religious, 3, 123, 139, 203, 208, 319, 375
Dijon, priest-mayor of, 52
Disarmament, 53, 267, 317, 322
Distressed areas, 196, 221, 364, 366, 415, 445, 459
Dominican Republic, 436, 487
Economic conditions, 119, 153, 196, 221, 222, 230, 364, 366, 415, 445, 495
Economic growth, 364, 415, 445, 495
Ecumenical movement, 41, 319, 375
Education, 31
 and reading, 89
 and small Catholic college, 92
 general, 83, 330
Egypt, 271
Eichmann, Adolf, 316, 427, 470
Eisenhower, Pres. Dwight D., 34, 82, 165, 243, 267, 270, 339, 390, 419, 459
Espionage, 195, 243, 267, 291, 302, 339, 419, 437, 498
Farm program, 245, 389, 412
Farm workers, 30
Federal Trade Commission, 165
Ferlinghetti, Lawrence, 118
Fiedler, Leslie, 176
Film festival, at Cannes, 345
Fiscal policies, 196, 415, 445, 495
Forand bill, 29, 199
Foreign aid
 by the U.S., 146, 196
 by the U.S.S.R., 412
Foreign policy, 243, 267, 271, 274, 291, 302, 339, 388, 390, 413, 419, 436, 461, 487
France, 5, 149, 322
Future, the uninteresting, 247
Gambling, morality and law, 281
Genocide, 316, 427, 470
Germany, 467
"Ghetto, Catholic," 363, 438, 450
Ginder, Father Richard, 54
Great Britain, 323, 349
Green, Henry, 472
Growth, national economic, 364, 415, 445, 495
Hammarskjold, Dag, 388, 437
Health insurance, 29, 199
Hope, the Christian and, 7, 329
Hospital strike, 292
Housing, 196, 247
Humphrey, Senator Hubert, 79, 140, 221
Hunton, George K., 485
Immigration, 28
India, 198, 226, 271
Indonesia, 369
Industry Council plan, 445, 495
Inflation, 415, 445, 495
Integration, 4, 15, 19, 58, 81, 220, 275, 292, 365, 414, 426, 485
Intellectuals, and the Church, 31, 178, 340
International Court of Justice, 486
Interracial Justice, Nat'l. Catholic Conference for, 485
Islam, 295
Israel, 316, 427, 470
Italy, 10, 116, 125, 244, 317
Japan, 246, 270, 339, 419
Japanese literature, 283
Jazz festival, 393
Jews, and Catholics, 123, 139, 165, 316, 347, 352, 427, 470
Journalism, 303, 317
Kagawa, Toyohiko, 142
Kennedy, Senator John F., 29, 37, 79, 140, 219, 221, 244, 258, 268, 280, 365, 387, 400, 411, 418, 444, 483
Khrushchev, Premier Nikita, 52, 149, 243, 267, 274, 291, 374, 484
King, Dr. Martin Luther, 275
Korea, 117, 163
Labor, 30, 119, 292, 364, 366, 445, 495
Labor party, in Great Britain, 323, 449
LaFarge, Father John, S.J., 485
Laity, role of, 244, 317, 363, 438, 450
Latin America, 34, 82, 271, 462, 487
Laymen, role of, 244, 317, 363, 438, 450
Leaders, in America, 400, 411, 444
Lercaro, Cardinal, 209
Liberal arts, the, 83
Literature in Japan, 283
Literary criticism, 13, 38, 167, 170, 173, 176, 255, 283, 421, 472
Loyalty oaths for students, 86
Lunch-counter sit-ins, 4, 220, 275
Lumumba, Patrice, 388, 437
Lutherans, 375
MacLeish, Archibald, 340
"Magazine X," 54
Mass media, 130
Medical care for the aged, 29, 196, 199
Meyer, Cardinal Albert, 281
Migratory workers, 30
Missile program, 116, 267
Moslems, 295
Music, popular, 143
N.A.A.C.P., 4, 275
Nashville, sit-ins, 220
Nasser, of Egypt, 271
Nazism, 316, 427, 470
Newport jazz festival, 393
Nixon, Vice Pres. Richard M., 37, 268, 315, 365, 387, 400, 411, 418, 444, 483
Nominating conventions, 115, 219, 268, 298, 315
North, racial discrimination in, 292
Nuclear weapons, 53, 197, 267, 317, 461, 498
O'Boyle, Archbishop Patrick A., 303
Offshore oil, 294
Olympics, the, 486
Organization of American States, 388, 459, 487
Osservatore Romano, 244, 317
Oxnam, Meth. Bishop G. Bromley, 164
Pacifists, 197
Pasternak, Boris, 170
Personality tests, 59
"Phenomenon of Man," 17, 439
Poetry, modern, 118
Point IV youth corps, 146
Poland, 255
Political conventions, 115, 219, 268, 298, 315
Politics, domestic, 6, 115, 291, 315, 322, 374, 389, 400, 411, 415, 444, 459, 491
Pope John XXIII
 and the Jews, 354
Post Office, the, and censorship, 245
Powers, Francis G., 195, 243, 267, 291, 302, 339, 419, 437, 498
Presidential candidates, 29, 37, 79, 115, 140, 164, 219, 268, 291, 298, 315, 322, 374, 375, 387, 400, 411, 418, 433, 444
Protestantism, changes in, 203
Protestants, 62, 203, 319, 375
 and Catholics, 29, 123, 139, 208, 219, 435, 460
 in Latin America, 462
Race relations, 4, 15, 19, 58, 81, 220, 250, 275, 292, 365, 414, 426, 485
Reading, in college, 89
Refugees, 369
Religion
 in Latin America, 464
 in the U.S., 350
"Religious issue, the," 79, 140, 164, 219, 244, 258, 280, 365, 375, 387, 435, 483, 517, 507, 509, 510
Religious liberty, in Spain, 141
Republican party, 115, 196, 243, 245, 268, 291, 298, 315, 389
Rockefeller, Gov. Nelson A., 115, 268, 315
Rome, 116, 224, 244, 317
Scandinavia, 515
Shakespeare, segregated, 19
Sholokhov, Mikhail, 170
Sicily, 125
Sit-in protests, 4, 81, 220, 275
Small Catholic college, survival of, 92
Smog, 82
Songs, popular, 143
South, the, 4, 58, 81, 275, 292, 414
South Africa, 250, 426
South Korea, 117, 163
Space, outer, 116, 317
Spain, 141, 247
Steel industry, 5, 364, 415, 445
Stevenson, Adlai E., 115, 268, 465
Student loyalty oaths, 86
Summit conference, the, 243, 267, 274, 291, 302, 339, 390
Surplus food, 245, 412
Technical assistance abroad, 146
Technology, 119, 221, 254, 364, 366, 415
Teen-agers, 143, 146
Teilhard de Chardin, 17, 439
Television, campaigning on, 341
 in Canada, 205
Tibet, 55, 140
Tokyo, 246
Trujillo, General Rafael, 436
Turkey, 163
U-2 incident, the, 195, 243, 267, 291, 302, 339, 419, 437, 498
Unemployment, 5, 221, 364, 366, 415, 445, 459
Unions, 119, 292, 364, 366, 445, 495
United Nations, 117, 163, 267, 271, 292, 317, 322, 388, 437, 459, 484
U.S.S.R., 52, 149, 195, 243, 267, 274, 291, 374, 461
Vatican, 116, 244, 318, 352
 and the U.S.S.R., 224
Walsh, Bishop James E., 5
Wealth, distribution of, 220, 271, 366
Welfare state, 515
West, Morris L., novels of, 421
Wilson, Edmund, 173
Women, status of, 258
Work week, a shorter, 119, 230
World Council of Churches, 319
World Court, 486
Younger generation, rise of, 400, 411, 444
Youth corps, 146

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